



WSA'S FIELD CONFERENCE
An Outdoor Exploration
Saturday, September 18th

Conference Speakers



Karen Jennings

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1A: The Long Game: Restoring the Preserve at Eisenhower

Karen Jennings is a Senior Project Manager with the Anne Arundel County Bureau of Watershed Protection and Restoration. She has over 20 years of experience in stream management and restoration, in both the public and private sectors. Karen has a BA degree in Geoscience from Franklin and Marshall College and a MS degree in Geology from the University of Vermont with a specialization in Fluvial Geomorphology. She is the Project Manager for the stream restoration portion of the improvements at the Preserve at Eisenhower Golf Course.

Kim and John Boris

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1B: Water, Water, Everywhere!

Kim and John Boris are members of Class 3, and became Watershed Stewards together! They live here in Oyster Harbor. John works for the Maryland Department of the Environment as a Licensed Environmental Health Specialist State of Maryland. In his work, he ensures that Maryland's groundwater resources are protected. Kim is a member of the Oyster Harbor Green Committee, and has done a significant amount of community engagement and education. Kim's initiatives in the community include painting and installing rain barrels, planting trees, and installing Purple Martin and Bat Boxes.



Chris Moore

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1B: Water, Water, Everywhere!

Chris Moore is a Chesapeake Bay Landscape Professional and a Maryland licensed landscape architect with over 25 years of professional experience, both nationally and abroad, on projects encompassing federal, municipal, cultural, institutional and residential clients. Prior to establishing himself as an independent contractor over 10 years ago, he worked for several notable firms in the Baltimore/Washington Metropolitan region, including Oehme, van Sweden & Associates in Washington DC, Ayers/Saint/Gross Architects + Planners in Baltimore and Underwood & Associates in Annapolis. In 2019 he established Welspryng LLC, which specializes in native plants, stormwater management, grading and drainage, site design and permitting. Welspryng provides consulting, design/build services, construction services and maintenance for landscape installations and site-scale, non-structural BMPs ranging in size from rain gardens to bio-retention facilities and outfall restorations.



Elizabeth Argo-Wilbanks

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1C: Rooted in Nature

Elizabeth has been proud to call Maryland home since the military brought her family here 5 years ago. She loves nature and strives to get children and their adults involved in connecting with nature. She does this through her work as a Master Watershed Steward and as an Anne Arundel County Public Schools teacher. When she's not working, she enjoys hiking, camping, reading and ice hockey with her spouse, children, and pet rabbit, Moo.



Julie Dieguez

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1C: Rooted in Nature

Julie Dieguez is currently the Green Specialist for Anne Arundel County Public Schools tasked with designing outdoor classrooms and outdoor therapeutic spaces at county middle schools under a Title IV federal grant. For many years Julie ran her own business, The Wild Child LLC, designing nature play spaces for younger children and served as the Coordinator of the Maryland No Child Left Inside Coalition, among other roles as an environmental educator and schoolyard habitat facilitator. She loves spending time in the outdoors, particularly with her co-adventurer, her rescue dog Journey.



Ginger Woolridge

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1D/2D: Meet the Trees: Getting to Know Your Woods

Ginger co-authored 'Essential Native Trees and Shrubs for the Eastern United States' with Tony Dove. The book was included on the New York Times Summer Reading List for 2018. Ginger's training is in landscape architecture and Tony recently retired as a senior horticulturist for the Smithsonian Institution. Their interest is in helping people choose native woody plants, fairly quickly and with confidence, toward a more ecologically productive environment.



Josh Clark

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1E/2E: Controlling the Chaos: Design Tips for Native Landscapes

Josh is the Restoration Coordinator for WSA. As an environmental designer, Josh specializes in innovative, resilient, and ecologically expressive landscape design, stormwater management, and native plantings. He has 15 years of experience in designing and installing landscapes for a variety of clients. He has worked with conservation districts rehabilitating streams and floodplains, at nurseries developing horticultural expertise, and with planning departments and architectural firms tackling small and large scale design projects. His design philosophy is derived from the idea that each site offers its own unique strengths and challenges and works to create functional, beautiful spaces that best serve the site and the client.

Josh grew up in rural Pennsylvania, surrounded by nature and farms, instilling in him a fascination with natural beauty and the satisfaction of working the land. This led him to pursue an education in designing landscapes that work with the land to better the land. He received his Master's in Landscape Architecture from Virginia Polytechnic and State University. He graduated from the University of Pittsburgh with a B.A. in Environmental Urban Planning and Religious Studies.



Tara Mairs

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1E/2E: Controlling the Chaos: Design Tips for Native Landscapes

Tara Mairs is a Landscape Designer, Watershed Steward, Certified Chesapeake Bay Landscape Professional, Level 2, and lover of all native plants. After many years as a technical editor, she decided to break free of the confines of a cubicle to start her own design business, Tara's Garden Design. She strives to balance the ecological, aesthetic, and practical needs of every space she designs. In rare spare moments, she also enjoys hiking, running, sailing, and adventures with her family.



Jennifer Vaccarro

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1E/2E: Controlling the Chaos: Design Tips for Native Landscapes

Jennifer's approach to design is heavily influenced by her commitment to restoring and preserving natural spaces. Even the most formal garden can be LIVING: comprised of beautiful native plants, providing aesthetic value to the landowner, and habitat value for pollinators, birds and beneficial insects. Jennifer strives to find creative and beautiful ways to integrate stormwater management solutions into landscapes that have a positive impact on the people who use them, and the ecosystems that surround them. Her planting philosophy dictates putting the right plant in the right place to produce beautiful landscapes without the need for chemical inputs or extensive watering and pruning. In addition to her design work, Jennifer works with Sustainable Resource Management, Inc. and Eco-Goats, removing invasive vegetation and restoring balanced and diverse forest systems. Jennifer holds a bachelor's degree in Landscape Architecture from Temple University and is a certified Chesapeake Bay Landscape Professional. She is a member of the Consortium of Support Professionals for the Anne Arundel County Watershed Stewards Academy, sits on the Maryland Invasive Plant Advisory Committee and is one of the founders of Cape Conservation Corps, a non-profit dedicated to promoting stewardship, educating neighbors and the ecological restoration of community lands in Cape St. Claire. Jennifer enjoys speaking to groups about native plants, stormwater mitigation and controlling invasive plant species. She is co-author of An Essential Guide to Woody Plants: The Flashcards Northeast Edition: Set One. Jennifer lives on a regenerative farm in Centreville where she and her partner raise chickens, pigs, turkeys, and eggs on pasture using rotational grazing methods.

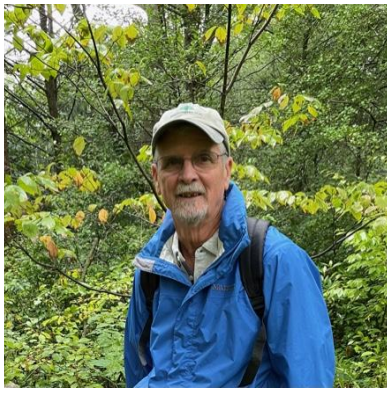


Sam Droege

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2A: Pollinator Pathway: What's the Buzz

Sam Droege has spent most of his career at the USGS Patuxent Wildlife Research Center. He has coordinated the North American Breeding Bird Survey Program, developed the North American Amphibian Monitoring Program, the BioBlitz, Cricket Crawl, and FrogwatchUSA programs, and worked on the design and evaluation of monitoring programs. Currently, he is developing an inventory and monitoring program for native bees, online identification guides for North American bees at www.discoverlife.org, and with Jessica Zelt reviving the North American Bird Phenology Program. His group maintains high-resolution photographs of insects and other macro natural history objects at: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/usgsbim/>



Jim MacNicholl

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2A: Pollinator Pathway: What's the Buzz

Jim is a Master Gardener in Anne Arundel County. He Co-Chairs the Bay-Wise Committee teaching residents sustainable landscaping practices to implement on their own that will improve our environment and the quality of our waterways. He's a Watershed Steward Candidate, a Chesapeake Bay Landscape Professional (CBLP-1) and he designs and installs conservation gardens for public and private spaces.



Lauren Toomey

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2A: Pollinator Pathway: What's the Buzz

As a class 13 Watershed Steward candidate, Lauren's capstone project entailed the establishment of the Pollinator Pathway for the state of Maryland, and Anne Arundel County specifically. The goal of the pathway is to develop grassroots community initiatives of planting native plants and seeds to expand areas of pollinator connectivity. Many exciting collaborative efforts are underway to include collaboration with the USGS Bee Inventory & Monitoring Lab where local ecotype native seed is collected and grown out. One successful outcome of this initiative was the giveaway of over 400 native plants at the Maryland State Fair in September.



Bob Royer

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2B: Turning Faith into Action

Bob Royer is an Elder at Woods Church, chair of the Property Management Ministry and has completed the Watershed Stewards Academy's "Short Course for Property Managers". Bob is retired from Northrop Grumman and enjoys using his engineering background in the work to make the buildings and the grounds of the church more eco-friendly in terms of energy use, stormwater remediation, and native habitat restoration.



Nan Henry

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2C: WSA Kids: Critters, Crafts, and Clean Water

Nan earned her Elementary Education degree through St. John's College (Annapolis, MD) and Bowie State University and taught science at Annapolis Middle School for over 20 years. Nan shared her knowledge and passion for the environment by raising countless terrapins in her classroom, helping to earn the Green School Award, and now develops and teaches engaging Environmental Literacy content as a Master Watershed Steward.



Denise Peach

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2C: WSA Kids: Critters, Crafts, and Clean Water

Denise Peach has been a teacher in Anne Arundel County for 20 years. She has taught summer art camps at Arlington Echo for 12 years. Denise is a Master Watershed Steward, Master Gardener and Master Composter and loves sharing her deep interest in the outdoors with the students she teaches.



Kyle Parr

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2C: WSA Kids: Critters, Crafts, and Clean Water

Kyle is an Environmental Literacy Assistant with the Chesapeake Connections outreach team at Arlington Echo. He works to develop and implement ways to get 6th-grade students outside and engaged with the environment in fun, creative, and meaningful ways.

He started at Arlington Echo as a high school intern from the Center of Applied Technology North's Environmental Resource Management program and since then he has worked with the 4th-grade environmental literacy program, The Trees are Terrific kindergarten program, Arlington Echo summer camps, and currently works with the Chesapeake Connections program.



Rachel Pierson

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Rachel Pierson is an Environmental Literacy Assistant with the 4th Grade Program at Arlington Echo, where she develops exciting lesson content and activities that reinforce Anne Arundel County's science curriculum while promoting environmental stewardship among 4th-grade students.

Rachel has a B.A. in Environmental Studies, a B.S. in Geography from Salisbury University, and a Master's in Natural Resources from the University of Vermont. Rachel's affinity for the Chesapeake Bay comes from growing up in Edgewater and spending her summers boating on the Rhode and West Rivers.